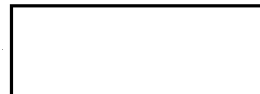




BEFORE THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF WORKING YOUTH

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VILLAGE YOUTH  
IN THE  
NEW YUGOSLAVIA

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BELGRADE, JULY 1948

## VILLAGE YOUTH IN NEW YUGOSLAVIA

The peoples of Yugoslavia, while waging a hard and persistent struggle against the occupiers and domestic traitors, stressed their wish for a new life, a juster social organisation, and their firm will to build up new Yugoslavia and make it entirely independent of imperialist cliques. By the building of the people's authority in the form of people's committees, by the strengthening of the people's army and the widening of mass antifascist organisations of the People's Front, the union of the antifascist youth of Yugoslavia and the women's antifascist front, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Yugoslavia the foundations of new Yugoslavia were laid.

By pursuing a policy of brotherhood and unity among the peoples of Yugoslavia on the basis of equality of all nations and by ensuring respect for the interests of national minorities and their rights, the People's Front and other antifascist organisations, gathered in it, succeeded in creating a powerful union of workers and peasants, and all patriots and honest citizens of Yugoslavia, regardless of national, political and religious adherence, in the struggle for the liberation of the country and the creation of an independent people's state. Relying on the aid of the anti-Hitlerite coalition and the democratic forces of the world, primarily on the brotherly Soviet Union, which all through the war, as well as later, helped Yugoslavia in her

struggle for independence both morally and materially, specially by its Red Army, the peoples of Yugoslavia won the victory thanks to their heroic struggle and established their new Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia.

The achievements of the national liberation struggle and the revolutionary transformation in the question of authority which was taken over by the working people, the basic political and moral rights of citizens and the important changes in economic relations in town and village, were guaranteed by the Constitution passed by the Constituent Assembly on Nov. 29, 1945.

In harmony with the Constitution, the wishes and interests of the working people, — big industrial enterprises, mines, communications, banks, foreign trade, etc, were nationalised, which enabled the state to exercise control and planning in these branches of economy, thus consolidating the socialist sector of economy. At the same time the increase of industrial production was made possible, as private industrialists not only helped the occupier during the war, placing their enterprises at his disposal as a result of which the latter were confiscated in the majority of cases, but also systematically sabotaged reconstruction and building up of our country, and checked production.

The working peasants received the land which was held by the big landowners, priests, village speculators and others, through the carrying out of the land reform. 908 thousand hectares of land were allotted to poor peasants including 60 thousand families of settlers in Vojvodina and Slavonia who received 320 thousand hectares of land with the necessary tools and implements. These peasant families had been transferred from devastated, backward and overpopulated areas of our country. Thus, the remnants of feudal relations in our country were finally liquidated. In

pre-war Yugoslavia the so-called land reform was also carried out several times, but chiefly on paper. In practice all these land reforms looked afterwards as follows: 671,365 village families possessed 639,543 hectares of land, while 1,301 big landowners who had over 100 hectares of land each, possessed a total of 684,235 hectares of land. The small and medium properties in prewar Yugoslavia totalled 49% of the land or 11,732,524 hectares, which amounted to 2.9 hectares per family, while the big landowners and richer peasants held 51% of the land or 12,114,246 hectares which, by an average, amounted to 170 hectares per family.

In the Osijek district (Slavonia) alone, 25 big landowners possessed 30,000 jutars of land (something over 13,000 hectares), of this 8,470 jutars belonged to the church, while in villages of the same district, there were 3,295 families without land.

The peasants have been freed from all debts to village usurers, speculators, banks and other capitalist elements and institutions, while the peasant property is protected by law and cannot be distrained for the payment of any debts.

Immediately after liberation the working people of Yugoslavia enthusiastically embarked upon the difficult task of reconstruction and building up of the country, of which a large part had been destroyed in the war. Besides human losses which exceed 1,700,000 during 4 years of war, the material loss was huge. The communications were completely destroyed, industry was shattered, thousands of villages burned down, agriculture was in a very difficult position, the livestock was reduced to one half, etc. The working impetus, voluntary work and competition, which was in full swing at all the working sites, is a reflection of the high conscience and patriotism of our people. The

participation in the national liberation struggle, the work of reconstruction and building up of our country, have a great influence on the conscience, ideas and views of all our men, especially the youth, who by their example both in war and building up, deserve the high tribute paid to them by our people.

Marshal Tito, speaking at the beginning of 1947 about the successes scored by our people in reconstruction and building up of the country although they had not found any financial reserves left, declared: »And yet we have succeeded that is, the peoples succeeded, in achieving great results thanks to their unity, their perseverance in work. We have achieved this because the authority is in the hands of the people, because all the important means of production are in the hands of workers, in the hands of the community and not of individual exploiters, whose aim in production was only profit and not the interests of the people. We have achieved this because we were and remain merciless in our attitude to speculation and smuggling, because we did not permit reactionaries in the country and outside it to hinder us in the realisation of our task which we set to ourselves; we achieved this because there exists among our peoples a strong faith in new Yugoslavia, because boundless love of all our peoples exists towards her, as she is the offspring of the common struggle and common hardships. We achieved these results because we have conscious and self-sacrificing workers, conscious peasants, conscious people's intelligentsia, because we have a splendid youth of whom we can be proud as they serve as an example to all with their self-sacrificing and persevering work on the building up and reconstruction of the country.

The great recognition which the youth of Yugoslavia

received from comrade Tito, has been fully deserved. It is the result of the persistent efforts made by the whole youth who, in all parts of our country, undertook a number of big and small tasks beginning with road repair, building of houses, and ending with the construction of railways. The most important working drive in 1946 in which the youth participated within the framework of the People's Front, was the work on the repair and building of 250,000 houses in burned down and destroyed areas. As early as 1946, 62,000 boys and girls, mostly village youth constructed with very primitive means, the 92 klms long Brčko—Bano-  
vići railway, within 7 months, although it was planned to build the railway in two years. In 1947 the youth of Yugoslavia with the participation of the democratic youth from other countries, constructed the Šamac—Sarajevo railway, 240 kms. long. The first train loaded with grains, passed on this railway 9 months after the work had started. Of 211,301 builders who took part in this work, 112,227 boys and girls were from villages.

Besides this, many other projects have been embarked upon. For instance, the »Ivo Lola Ribar« machine tool factory near Belgrade, the factory of steam turbines and boilers near Zagreb, the »Titan« factory and many others. In 1945—1946 the youth worked on the construction of the Posava and Bečej canals, whereby 5200 hectares of land were reclaimed from the floods and ensured for cultivation. In Macedonia 2,000 hectares of land in the Strumica plain were drained and ensured for cultivation. Work was done on the draining of the Mostar swamps, the Neretva mouth, certain karst fields and other actions. The swampy fields — malarial breeding places, were turned into arable land of which some are giving two harvests yearly. In 1946 the youth gave 16,284,062 voluntary working

days on the reconstruction and building up of the country, while in 1947 it saved 3,500,000,000 dinars to the state by their voluntary work.

This year the peasant youth will be represented in largest numbers on the construction of the Brotherhood and Unity highway from Belgrade to Zagreb, on the construction of New Belgrade, the enlarging of the factory in Zeleznik, on the Nikšić—Titograd railway in Montenegro which is being completed, on the hydro-power station in Macedonia, the Kučevo — Brodica railway, the construction of New Gorica, the building of a pipe factory in Sisak, a metalurgical combined works and a number of other actions. The most important drive of the People's Front in which the youth from the villages are mostly taking part, is the construction of 4,000 cooperative village centers, which represent an important factor in the strengthening of the peasant cooperative movement and which will also be village cultural centres. Hundreds of thousands of boys and girls from villages are going voluntarily to take part in the building up of their happy homeland, to speed up the building of socialism in our country. Young men and girls from villages whose political and cultural outlook was very narrow, are acquiring new knowledge and views concerning the world, they are impatiently, joyfully and confidently watching the successes in the struggle for the fulfilment of the 5-year plan.

The working drives are not confined to working sites of new factories, railways and towns. They also extend to schools where thousands of boys and girls are being educated. Here new men are made, here the character of the youth of new Tito's Yugoslavia is being forged. The widely developed cultural and educational, ideological and political,

as well as expert work enables the youth to acquire knowledge in various spheres. On the Samac-Sarajevo youth railway 15,867 boys and girls learned to read and write, 14,742 youth attended various courses for specialists. They acquired various qualifications and 12,000 joined the industry directly from the railway. By perfecting their knowledge, they became experts in their work. 13,539 lectures were given. Courses for the training of youth are being held at factory working sites and the youth who have helped to build the factory, are staying on to work there.

The village youth, by working on the construction of factories, railways and village cooperative centres and generally participating in the development of the peasant cooperative movement, are also working for their better future. They all know that by the end of 5-year plan, over 5,000 tractors will be used for the ploughing of our fields, 250,000 new iron ploughs made in our factories will replace the wooden ploughs of which there were 450,000 in use in prewar Yugoslavia. We shall have about 8,000 binders and 220,000 combines, the quantities of artificial fertilisers will be greater several times over, a large number of villages will receive electric energy, etc. — all of which will result in a considerable increase of the agricultural production, a greater effectiveness of work and consequently the raising of the living standard of the population. The 5-year plan set special problems and tasks to agriculture. The surfaces under industrial plants will be increased during the 5-year plan by 400,000 hectares while production is to be raised by about 20% above the prewar, the scattered smallholding peasant property is to be included in planned production. This increase of the agricultural production is to be achieved by the application of agro-technical measures and the intensification of agricultural activity

in the first years of the Plan. This can only be achieved by the development of agricultural cooperative societies.

The proper policy of our government, which, by a series of measures and decrees, primarily by the buy-up system and taxation, limits the speculating tendencies of the Kulaks and other capitalist elements in the villages, while facilitating the supplying of small and middle peasants with the necessary industrial goods, specially with agricultural machines — is mobilising all working people of our country for the fulfilment of these tasks.

By the development of peasant cooperative movement from the lowest form of supplying and consumers cooperative societies up to the peasant working societies, the socialist reconstruction of agriculture is gradually being made. This method which the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and the people's authority are using to direct agriculture towards socialism, is the only right path and is being adopted by both the lower and middle peasant masses. This is evident from the fact that already over 11 million inhabitants in our country have been included in the cooperative trade, while 900 peasant working cooperatives are cultivating 2,000 hectares of land. The agricultural cooperative societies are scoring important results in the development of the village economy.

The inhabitants of the small village of Ribarevo in the Pomoravlje area, cultivated 95 hectares of the former municipal untilled land which is now the property of their peasant cooperative society. Their income from this land was over one million dinars. With this money they are now introducing electricity in their village. In the cooperative village centers which they are building this year, they will have a cinema, and they have also made plans for the building of a cooperative dairy and an electric flour mill.

The villages of Donji and Gornji Oštri Vrh and Novaki at a distance of only 5 kms, from the Ozje hydro station, recently received electric lighting. The peasants alone cut logs in the woods and brought them to the village while the workers from Karlovac helped them in mounting, and they were also helped by the people's authority. In the room of Manda Novosel, a woman peasant, electric light is on late at night. Her children read and write and she sews linen. A small petroleum lamp stands on the shelf as a memory of the times when the authority was one thing and the people another.

New life is pervading the village today. Economic difficulties, which formerly affected the peasant masses and brought them to the verge of ruin are no more. New life is felt in the great interest of the peasant for the progressive cultivation of land, and they are reporting in masses to take part in the struggle for a larger yield. Members of the peasant working cooperative society »Ivo Lola Ribar« of Severin, received 8,000 kgs, of potatoes per jutar although it was a draughty season. This year they are building two silos and a stable, a warehouse for grains and 5 dwelling houses. Their neighbours who are not yet members of the cooperative society are constantly requesting to be admitted. In the »Vlastimir Stevanović« peasant working society at Kaonik the yield was 1,900 kgs. of wheat and 3,000 kgs. of maize per jutar in spite of the draught.

The youth working groups which are being formed in nearly all working cooperative societies, on the initiative of the Marshal Tito peasant working cooperative society at Koriža near Virovitica — are contributing greatly to the success of the peasant working societies. They are the upholders of the spirit of competition in the struggle for a larger yield. Ivan Koprivica of the peasant working coo-

perative at Vrbas, although 19 years of age, is successfully conducting the work of the peasant brigade. Last year 355 working days were recorded to his credit. 16 year old Zorka Vučurović is the youngest shock-worker of the peasant working cooperative »Sutjeska« at Vrbas.

Passing through the plains of Vojvodina and Slavonia along the fertile river valley and through the fields of the plateaux, we see our young tractorists sitting on their powerful »Staljinetz«, »Oliver« and other tractors, tilling land, sowing, transporting, or doing other work. Most of them have only been handling the tractor for a year or two. Many things they do not know yet, but they are still surpassing the norm and fulfilling the plan ahead of schedule. Young persons who are now learning to handle the tractors are often seen sitting beside them. Among them there are girls who are in ever increasing numbers joining economic life of the village and are no longer merely housekeepers. They are all proud of their achievements, of their tractors. They are waiting with impatience for the time when they will plough with tractors made in our own factories, by our workers. The tractorists and youth tractor brigades of the Pančevo agricultural machine depot have undertaken to surpass the plan of the spring sowing and ploughing by 30%. Last year they were the first to fulfil the plan, they saved the largest quantities of fuel and lubricants and had the least defects. The tractorists of the youth tractor brigade Ivo Lola Ribar of the Osijek agricultural machine depot have announced a competition both in regard to the fulfilment and the surpassing of norms and plans and in regard to the cultural life and entertainment, challenging all youth tractor brigades in Yugoslavia. In the spring sowing and ploughing they fulfilled the plan by 120% while the youth tractor brigade

of the Zagreb agricultural machine depot fulfilled the plan by 148%. The women's youth tractor brigades in Nova Topola are also successfully competing with other brigades and surpassing the norms and plans set to them. The youth Dubljanin Svetomir, a 50% disabled ex-service man, last year attended the tractor course and today he is already a tractorist and shock-worker. He regularly surpasses the norm by 39%. Momčilo Mirilo, a young man always smiling and in good spirits, who until recently helped his parents in the cultivation of a small farm, is now a tractorist and shock-worker of the 4th brigade of the agricultural machine depot at Jaša Tomić.

Stevan Lukić, a member of the 1st brigade of the agricultural machine depot at Pašičevo, is constantly surpassing the norm in the night shift by 36%, and saving fuel by 35%. The majority of his young comrades in the brigade are scoring similar successes. Stanko Djakonović, a shock worker of Lovčenec in Bačka, who easily fulfils the norm by 200%, was a delegate to the II Congress of the People's Youth of Yugoslavia. The young Mica Dujilo is in charge of the 8th girls' tractor brigade of the Zagreb agricultural machine depot and shows good results in her work.

The living conditions of the youth and every worker on the state farms are constantly improving. The landowners who formerly owned this property, did not show much care for the life of the workers whom they mercilessly exploited. Today they are living a new life. Comfortable flats, reading rooms, rest homes and other buildings are being built in increasing numbers. Work is being mechanised and perfected more and more. The youth combiners at the Belje state farm collected the harvest with combines for the first time in our country, last year.

The life in our village is changing parallel with the building up of our country. Much has been changed already. In the small Banat village of Bičar winter was formerly boring and monotonous. The only entertainment was provided by the inns where people drank and quarrelled. Today it looks quite different. In the evening, as by day, one can see grown up men, women and youth entering the school. Inside a course for the illiterate is being held. A course for grafting has also been organised and there is a reading room which is regularly attended especially by the youth. The newly opened library attracts a great many people. Nearly every Sunday the youth give performances and boys and girls from the neighbouring villages often come to visit them.

Still everything is not going on smoothly. There are still some people who think that Yugoslavia can return to capitalism and stop progressing towards socialism where the Communist Party, Comrade Tito, and the whole working people are leading them. The village speculators and Kulaks are struggling to check the historical development of new Yugoslavia, in order to preserve their exploiting positions. But these are only attempts which remain isolated and are speedily dwindling away under pressure from the working people, and so the last hopes which are still perhaps being offered by foreign imperialists, are being dashed.

Parallel with the economic development of our country, the living standard is also improving. This year it will be 107% compared to the prewar living standard. There is no fear of unemployment for our youth and our working people any longer. The planned socialist economy of our country is enabling all working men in our country to live a life worthy of man.

Great successes have also been scored in the cultural

transformation of our villages. The political consciousness of the youth and older people is speedily developing and the working peasants now represent a firm support of our Party, government and the working class in the struggle for socialism. To what extent the youth of the village have politically risen, is shown by the fact that in the Federative Assembly and the Council of Nationalities alone, there are 30 youth deputies, mostly from the village.

In many villages of Macedonia, Bosnia and other regions the majority of the population was illiterate. The youth as well as others are greatly contributing to the liquidation of illiteracy. The young Argida Ivanovna the leader of the course for the illiterates in Skoplje, lives at the other end of the town from her pupils. Every day she walks two hours, to the course and back, but she is not desisting and is successfully conducting her course. The pupils adore her. While teaching them the letters she also tells them about Tito, Lenin and Stalin, about the heroes and shock workers.

Formerly, in prewar Yugoslavia young Macedonians were forbidden to learn in their own language. There were also very few teachers who knew Macedonian. Velin Nakovski, a youth from Strumica, who after matriculating, finished a teachers' course, went to teach in Novo Selo. After having repaired the school, he gathered the children and before writing the first letter on the board, said to them: »Children, today we are beginning to learn in our mother tongue. Comrades, this was not possible till today«.

The Shiptar women of Kosovo and Metohija and Moslem women of Bosnia and Hercegovina are removing the veil — the sign of slavery and backwardness. Juzida Hasani, a young Shiptar from Priština, discarded the veil

and is now a teacher. Many girls and women are following her example.

Our country was very backward, but our peoples are all the more exerting all their efforts and taking pains to eliminate this backwardness as soon as possible. Of 1,969,137 illiterate persons at the end of 1947, a large number are now learning to read and write in the courses for the illiterate while 820,273 illiterate persons have learned to read and write since the liberation. The struggle against illiteracy is the greatest activity in the cultural field of the People's Youth organisation. This work is being done with the help of the People's Front and the people's authority.

The law concerning compulsory 7-year education which is already being implemented, will greatly contribute to the preliminary education of children or for their work in economy. The number of secondary schools has risen from 8,956 to 15,165 in comparison with the prewar position, while the number of secondary school pupils has risen from 792,789 to 1,669,578. The number of pupils and students is 2,130,734. The increase of secondary vocational schools is particularly marked. Thus, there were only four middle agricultural schools in Yugoslavia before the war, today 104 secondary and lower agricultural schools are working with 5,850 youth, mostly from the villages, who are attending the lessons free of charge.

The publishing activity has been greatly increased. In 1947, 2,376 publications were printed with a circulation of 21,602,000 as compared to 1,070 publications in 6,950,000 copies in 1946 or 1,057 publications in 1938. In our country there are 2,235 cultural institutes, 10,530 reading rooms and libraries, 1,250 people's lecture halls and various other institutions. All these cultural institutes are today at the disposal of the wide masses of the people and youth are

primarily benefiting by them, as no obstacles are standing in their way any longer, preventing them from acquiring the necessary knowledge. The attendance of secondary and higher schools used to be the monopoly of a small number of youth from the wealthier classes. Today by providing free education and granting a large number of scholarships and their aid, the people's authorities have opened vistas of knowledge, the arts and culture to our youth and all this cultural wealth is becoming their possession more and more.

The general cultural development of the villages is followed by the development of physical culture which is spreading more and more among the wide masses of village youth. The mountains of Slovenia and Bosnia are attracting mountaineers and skiers by their scenery. Our workers take their rest in these mountains as well as on the Adriatic. In 1947, 86,166 children and youth spent their summer holidays in 347 rest homes. In 1948 114,100 children and youth will take their rest and spend the summer months in 547 rest homes.

The People's Youth organisation plays a very important role in the life, work and successes of the village youth. This organisation embraces nearly the whole village youth, and together with the working and school youth, represents a huge army of young builders of socialism. The 8th plenary session of the Central Council of the People's Youth of Yugoslavia held at the beginning of 1947, came to the following conclusion after analysing the work and successes of the People's Youth in the villages: »The People's Youth has developed into a single permanent organisation of our youth which has scored big successes in the rallying of youth to take part in the tasks for the building up of our country. In their ranks it achieved the unity of views

which is expressed in its participation and readiness to take part in the building of socialism in our country with increased forces». The call of the Executive Committee of the People's Front for the participation of youth in the construction of 4,000 cooperative village centers was accepted on this occasion.

The life of the village youth is very interesting. The contents of life and work of every youth, boy and girl, are linked with the active body of the People's Youth. The performances which they give, the reading rooms which the comrades attend and in which they spend many happy hours of leisure, the sports contests watched with tension, the great efforts on the building up of the country — linked them together. They have forged friendships which are the finest part of their life. Very few of the village youth did not take part in working drives, and many of them have passed through nearly all important actions organised by the People's Youth and the People's Front. Many of them are shock workers and have been decorated or singled out for praise. They remember with joy the comrades from all parts of our country, as well as from other countries, with whom they worked, the majority of whom they never saw before and perhaps will never see again. Although they sometimes disagree on certain questions at conferences of active groups, they are united in the fulfilment of their tasks, as they all love their country and people. Our youth always take as an example, the heroic youth of the great Soviet Union, who by giving their lives, in the fields of Yugoslavia, in the streets of our cities, for our freedom, eternally indebted our peoples and sealed in blood the alliance with us during the struggle against our common enemies.

Comrade Tito declared that the year 1948 will be the

hardest year of our 5 year plan. Our people and our youth are aware of this. The great successes in the building up of the country are connected with the big changes in social and economic relations which are occurring in our country. The resistance of exploiting capitalist elements cannot check the progress of our economic building up. The youth of the villages, as the most numerous section of the People's Youth of Yugoslavia, within the framework of the People's Front, are a powerful factor in the struggle for a better life of our peoples. In this struggle the young generation of new Yugoslavia is being educated in the spirit of love towards its happy homeland, towards the brotherly peoples of the Soviet Union and other Slav peoples, as well as towards the democratic forces of the whole world, and towards the organisers of all the victories of the peoples of Yugoslavia in war and peace, — the Communist Party of Yugoslavia and its wise leader, the beloved leader and teacher of the youth, comrade Tito.

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Approved For Release 2006/11/13 : CIA-RDP83-00415R001400050014-5

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## **YOUTH PRESS**

### **PAPERS PUBLISHED BY THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF THE PEOPLES YOUTH OF JUGOSLAVIA**

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Central youth paper. Comes out twice a week. Began appearing in September 1944 as continuation of papers: »Mi mladi« organ Central Committee United Federation of Antifascist Youth of Yugoslavia and »Omladinska borba« organ of Central Committee of Federation Communist Youth of Yugoslavia.

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Approved For Release 2006/11/13 : CIA-RDP83-00415R001400050014-5

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Approved For Release 2006/11/13 : CIA-RDP83-00415R001400050014-5

BEFORE THE INTERNA-  
TIONAL CONFERENCE  
OF WORKING YOUTH

**YOUNG WORKERS  
OF THE NEW  
JUGOSLAVIA**

## THE YOUNG WORKERS OF YUGOSLAVIA

The National Liberation Struggle of the peoples of Yugoslavia waged against the fascist aggressors and the domestic traitors, resulted not only in the complete liberation of the country but also in notable achievements in economic, social and political fields. In this struggle our peoples forged their unshatterable unity and solved the problem of nationalities which, in the old Yugoslavia, was a burning question and was always a stumbling-block in the path in rallying the people's efforts. In the course of the struggle, a new, genuinely people's and consistently democratic authority was built on the ruins of the old anti-people's regime; firm foundations were laid for the Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Through series of indispensable economic enactments, the people's authority brought about radical changes in the economic structure of our country. With the nationalisation of capitalist enterprises, the exploitation of the working class and masses in general became a thing of the past, thus placing the basic means of production

in the hands of the people. Under the Law of Agrarian Reform 1,000,000 hectares of land were distributed among landless and small land owners who formerly did not have even enough land to meet their own needs. This solved the agrarian problem. Moreover, the elimination of large estates gave the working peasantry the fullest safeguard from the ruthless exploitation of landowners and raised them from the poverty which in the old Yugoslavia always accompanied them. Without the great changes such as the new character of the authorities and our new economic structure, the working class of Yugoslavia could not have won for itself the rights it enjoys today — rights which constitute the basis for the speedy improvement of our living standard and which provide the ground-work for comprehensive development. With the lack of such a genuine people's authority it would have been impossible to solve all other social problems in the interests of the working class of our country.

It is therefore obvious that without such far reaching political and economic changes in this country, the favourable social and economic position of youth today and that of the working youth in particular would not have been feasible. The position of the youth today should be pointed out especially because this youth was subjected to ruthless capitalist exploitation and was forced to live and work under the grimmest conditions in former Yugoslavia.

### **POSITION OF THE WORKING YOUTH IN THE OLD YUGOSLAVIA**

In pre-war Yugoslavia not the slightest concern was displayed for the younger generations of the working class. The ruling capitalist class was concerned solely with its interests, the ways and means of piling the fattest profits possible. In order to acquire the minimum technical skill needed for work in industry, our youth were condemned to ceaseless, inhuman exploitation which included doing menial chores and even occasional beatings in no way connected with their trades. There was no question of any kind of cultural or political education for young workers in the old Yugoslavia, because the capitalists were bent on preventing young workers from making any advancements in this respect. The so-called Labour Laws were based on these same »principles«.

Under the pressure of the working class and that of its younger generation, the bourgeoisie of the old Yugoslavia was compelled to make some concessions to the workers. But, of course, these concessions were short-lived and were actually never fully enforced. Thus in 1921 and 1923 laws regulating labour relationships were passed. They contained some very limited and insignificant concessions. However, even these laws were never fully enforced nor did employers abide by them. Usually, factory owners and managers at work-sites had their own ideas about labour regulations and made

them coincide with their own interests. Such a state of affairs was naturally a serious handicap to young people who entered production in order to learn a trade. The policy of exploitation pursued by employers turned the youth into unskilled labourers who were constantly thwarted in their endeavours to enhance their status. The majority of the youth employed were children of workers, poor peasants and townsfolk who lacked the means of support.

The average age of young workers in the old Yugoslavia was between 12 and 15. Abandoned to the arbitrary actions of employers in industry and the trades, the children had no fixed working hours. It was not unusual for employers to decree a 14—16 hour day. Furthermore, it was a generally accepted practice to make the apprentices do all kinds of work around the house, go on errands and even work in the fields.

The utter lack of interest devoted in solving the social problems of youth in industry and the trades, is best borne out by the fact that in pre-war Yugoslavia there were only 5 hostels for apprentices and they were in fact only temporary lodgings for the apprentices until they learned their trades. However, these hostels which were founded by »philanthropic« capitalist societies »Privredni« (The Tradesman) in Belgrade and the Croatian »Radiša« (The Worker), only served as instruments of exploitation. Each youth who passed through these hostels had to sign a contract binding him to pay, for life, a

certain percentage of his earnings once he became a skilled worker. However, only a small number of youth who entered these hostels managed to complete their training with any appreciable amount of success, so that during the 30 years existence of »Privrednik«, out of 12,000 apprentices enrolled only 2,200 received their skilled workers diplomas.

The principal method of instruction in the hostels was physical punishment. Instead of offering the youth the benefits of libraries, reading-rooms or cultural and artistic activities, they were subjected to floggings.

The state not only failed to protect minors at work but in fact at all times sought to protect the interests of the employers. This was only comprehensible since such an attitude was an integral part of the general endeavours to stifle the working class struggle which was being waged to attain the solution of the fundamental social-economic problems.

#### **SOCIAL STATUS OF APPRENTICES IN YUGOSLAVIA**

As a result of comprehensive care and efforts on the part of the state, in the new Yugoslavia the status of young workers has undergone a very major change. Prospects for allround development and advancement are open to them. The new position and rights of the young workers are guaranteed by the Constitution of the

Federative People's Republic of Yugoslavia. Article 20 of the Constitution states: »minors in employment enjoy special protection of the state«. The Constitution also ensures the broad possibilities for the development of youth in cultural and political domains. It stipulates that every citizen of Yugoslavia, and accordingly every young boy and girl, has the right to an elementary and a secondary school education irrespective of his or her material standing.

Special decrees embodying the principles laid down in the Constitution, regulate the status of the working youth. On April 5th 1943, our National Assembly promulgated the Law on Apprentices. This Law was among the first to be passed by the National Assembly at its first regular sitting. This fact alone suffices to prove the great attention devoted by our state to young workers. This Law makes a decisive break with the intolerable living and working conditions prevalent in the old capitalist Yugoslavia and ensures our youth the fullest rights and protection. It provides the basis for the speedy technical and cultural development of the youth; it lays down the eight-hour day, which includes the time spent in vocational schools, at courses etc. Article 5 of the Law on Apprentices prohibits the employment of youth under 14 years of age in factories and, in certain branches of economy such as in mining and in the chemical industry, under eighteen years of age. Nightwork and overtime work as well as jobs which might be detrimental to health are

forbidden to minors, (Article 6). The Law also prescribes the duties of employers and apprentices. It also gives every apprentice the right to a paid two-weeks vacation each year. After this law was passed, the people's authorities issued a series of orders, decrees, directives and instructions in order to ensure its fullest implementation.

Other laws regulating work relationships dealt with matters concerning employed youth. For example, the Law on the inspection of work, (Article 2), makes state work inspection compulsory; it ensures supervision of the employment of apprentices, their legal protection, conditions for annual vacations, etc. This means that with a series of special decrees and regulations, the state obliges its work inspectors to see to it that all laws pertaining to young workers are properly carried out. Employers are subject to severe punishment by the people's authority if they fail to abide by these laws, regardless of whether a breach of the law occurred in, the state, cooperative or private sectors of economy.

Work inspectors, chosen by the workers from amongst themselves, aid state organs in enforcing and applying legal dispositions in a manner which best suits the interests of the working people of our country. These measures, whose enforcement is ensured by the people's authority with the participation of the broad masses, have solved and are still solving a host of vital youth problems in industry and the trades, so that minors in employment today enjoy

all the blessings of the social structure of our country. Besides having favourable work conditions as well as opportunities for technical and general advancement, our young workers enjoy the benefits of social insurance, free medical care, including the provision of a wide net-work of hospitals, sanatoriums, resorts, etc. Young Yugoslav workers today live as equal members of society and with their shockwork in production they are keenly and selflessly striving towards the further progress of our country.

#### **CARE SHOWN IN NEW YUGOSLAVIA FOR APPRENTICES**

Immediately after our land was cleared of the occupying forces, the people's authority embarked upon the task of resolving the many social-economic problems facing youth in industry and the trades. The Law on Apprentices bound all people's committees to launch cooperative homes for apprentices in all localities where there are over thirty homeless young workers. Since the Liberation to date, 185 homes accommodating some 12,000 young boys and girls were founded. To the youth these institutions mean a regular home, good meals, and a place to rest after work and study as well as a chance to raise their cultural level. These homes are equipped with libraries and study-halls and have various sections for cultural activities. Our young workers nowadays do not know physical punishments, floggings and the like.

The people's authority (people's committees and enterprises) supply the funds needed to run these homes. It is with measures such as these undertaken by the people's authority in solving youth problems that have made the lives of young workers happier and gayer.

As the fulfillment of the Five Year Plan progresses, so does the growth of the economic strength of our country. Parallel with the general economic advance, the living standard of the working class and the working masses in general rises, and as part of this, the improved conditions under which our youth lives and works are particularly apparent. In 1948, new youth homes are to be opened for thousands.

#### **BROAD PROSPECTS FOR YOUTH IN ECONOMY**

The people's authorities devote the utmost care to our youth and with every passing day, our young people are leading an increasingly better and more comfortable living. In order to help the youth materially, the people's authorities are taking advantage of all cultural and scientific achievements. To this end, financial means have been set aside in the management's funds in all enterprises and every year the Federal Government and the governments of the people's republics extend financial aid to these organizations with the object of assisting them in carrying out cultural-educational activities. These funds are spent on the erection of new schools,

cultural institutions, libraries etc. The greatest opportunities have been laid before the youth for their cultural advancement. Theaters, cinemas and all other cultural institutions are today accessible to young people. The material basis whereby young people in industry and trades can devote their leisure time to cultural work has been laid. This is why an exceptionally large portion of the youth is active in the various cultural and artistic activities in their centers.

The people's authority devotes particular attention to the technical training of youth. In 1947 over 100 industrial schools with workshops attached to them, were founded and over 10,000 young persons are enrolled in them. The state subsidizes these schools, provides for their material requirements, and supplies the poorer pupils with school requisites.

#### **ANNUAL HOLIDAYS FOR YOUNG WORKERS**

Besides the material means invested by the state in the youth centers, schools and while at work, making the life of youth better and happier, special funds are allocated to enable apprentices to take full advantage of their annual vacation. In 1947, the people's authority and the Central Committee of the United Trade Unions of Yugoslavia paid out nearly 8,000,000 dinars for these fortnightly vacations. 12,2% of the total number of apprentices in crafts, industry and trades, spent their holidays in summer re-

sorts located in some of the most attractive parts of our country.

In 1948, substantially greater funds have been set aside for this purpose. The Central Committee of the United Trade Unions of Yugoslavia has allotted 5,000,000 dinars from its budget to be used in helping our young toilers to go on a holiday.

### OUTLOOK FOR THE FUTURE

Our working youth knows of no unemployment such as is prevalent in all capitalist countries. To the contrary, our economy requires many more thousands of workers, new cadres, and the needs increase daily with our economic progress. This is the law of economics prevailing in countries with a people's authority, where the means of production are owned by the people and where the goal of the productive forces is not to make profit but to satisfy the needs of the nation. Being fully aware of this, the working youth is intensifying its creative efforts in every field of work, in the factories, at construction locations, in voluntary work drives etc.

The youth lines Brcko—Banovici and Samac—Sarajevo, as well as a whole range of other projects, were a valuable school in which our youth gained technical skill and acquired cultural gains. Thousands of young people at these work-sites applied for courses and for jobs in production. They were housed, and employed

and given training for their future specialisations.

As the Five Year Plan progresses, in present and new factories thousands of trainees will get jobs and become qualified workers. The far-reaching social and economic changes in Yugoslavia were also instrumental in creating a changed attitude of man towards work. Love for work has become a general characteristic of our peoples and youth. For us, work no longer signifies a burden but rather a matter of pride and a social obligation towards the community, because we work for ourselves, for our peoples and for their happier life — for the building up of socialism.

In this work on constructing socialism, our youth sees not only the solution to all social-economic problems which we inherited from the past, but also the creation of new schools, universities, laboratories, new cultural institutions, libraries, hospitals sanatoriums etc. This perspective imbues our youth with even greater energy for unflagging efforts in the fulfilment of the tasks set down in the Five Year Plan.

For this reason, our young workers, their elder comrades, and all the working people of our country are devoting their utmost energies to the construction of new plants, railway lines, roads etc. They are doing all this without anyone's help and despite the attempts by foreign imperialists to brake our construction of a happier homeland.

Approved For Release 2006/11/13 : CIA-RDP83-00415R001400050014-5

Undaunted by all obstacles and difficulties, the working class of Yugoslavia and its youth, shoulder to shoulder with all the working peoples of our country, is indomitably marching along the road to socialism, aware that this road leads to a better and happier future.

Approved For Release 2006/11/13 : CIA-RDP83-00415R001400050014